



The Marini Trial



***Italian State
Repression
of Anarchist
Revolt
and
Anarchist
Responses***



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INTRODUCTION

Those who rebel consciously against the ruling order, those who attack it without respite in however small a manner, are a real threat to the system of domination and exploitation. When these individuals are also those for whom anarchy and revolution are not just fine words, but reflect their decision to face life and struggle in a particular manner, the state recognizes that their revolt will be ongoing and needs to be suppressed. Therefore, it develops various strategies for repression, using the legal, police, judiciary and prison systems to keep those who rebel occupied with defending themselves,

The Marini trial against anarchists in Italy, which has been going on for several years (the investigation beginning nearly ten years ago), provides a concrete example of this process. Even though the specific aspects of the legal framework the prosecutor, Marini, is using and the specific functioning of the judicial system in Italy are not precisely the same as those we deal with here in the US, there is a great deal we can learn about the general repressive functioning of the state from these events.

In addition, some understanding of these events can provide a basis for more intelligent solidarity. Solidarity with our comrades who are on trial or in prison is essential. But revolutionary solidarity means something other than mere "support" that often seems to become nothing more than charity work that actually distracts from revolutionary struggle and may even lead to a compromise of our own principles. Daniela Carmignani has described revolutionary solidarity as "A project which is a point of reference and stimulus for the imprisoned comrades, who in turn are a point of reference for it". In other words, it is a continuation of our insurgent practice with a focus on attacking the specific institutions and structures which have caused our comrades to be imprisoned. Writing to prisoners, finding ways to get the money necessary for legal expenses, publishing information and the like are all fine and necessary things to do, but they only become aspects of revolutionary solidarity when they are part of a project of attack against the institutions that arrest, judge and imprison us. Revolutionary solidarity is, thus, not a matter of defense, but of attack.

A SUMMARY OF THE MARINI TRIAL AND RELATED EVENTS

In order to grasp how the Marini trial developed, it is necessary to go back a bit to an arrest that happened shortly before the investigation officially began. On September 19, 1994, five anarchists, Jean Weir, Antonio Budini, Christos Stratigopoulos, Eva Tziutzia and Carlo Tesseri were arrested near Rovereto, Italy following an armed robbery at the rural savings bank of Rovereto. The same day Antonio's house in Milan was raided. The local media immediately began a campaign of vilification, speaking about fictitious international criminal organizations, Red Brigade connections, terrorist gangs and the like, and also implying that the comrades were responsible for several other unsolved robberies. Individual anarchists in Rovereto immediately leafleted and posted flyers in the area, denouncing the attempts of the police and the press to build a frame-up. Comrades throughout Italy also expressed their solidarity. Meanwhile fascists attempted to close down Clinamen, a self-managed anarchist center in the area, using both petition and arson in the attempt.

On September 30, a summary trial in the first degree took place. Comrades from all over Italy showed up to show the support. This trial ended with three five year sentences (Jean, Antonio, Christos) and one six year sentence (Carlo) Eva was set free as unconnected to the charges.

Immediately the authorities began proceedings against the four relating to two other robberies that happened the previous July in Ravina. The four arrested anarchists issued a declaration (see below) claiming the robbery of the rural savings bank in Rovereto, but pointing out that the new charges were an attempted frame-up. Formal charges for the robberies in Ravina were issued on November 4.

Numerous acts of solidarity occurred including the posting of flyers, the publication of dossiers in solidarity with the comrades, boisterous gatherings in front of the prisons where they were locked up involving fireworks, graffiti and banners calling for the liberation of the comrades and the destruction of the prisons and a variety of other actions.

At the same time, police harassment against anarchist on the outside increased with raids, searches, detentions and interrogations. The anarchist weekly *Canenero* was raided in December 1994, and a court ordered issue number 9 of this weekly to be confiscated less than a month later. Anarchists were harassed, detained, arrested and given exorbitant fines for posting flyers. Homes, publishing projects, anarchist spaces and

the like were all raided and Alfredo Bonanno, active in the anarchist movement for over twenty years (and defined by the authorities and the press as “a leader”), was sought, though he was not making any attempt to hide.

On January 30th, 1995, the public prosecutor of Rovereto called for the second degree of the trial about the robbery in Rovereto, claiming that the sentences of the trial of the first degree were too short. Raids continued against anarchists. On April 19th, the preliminary hearing regarding the two robberies with which the Italian authorities were trying to frame the four imprisoned anarchists was held, and the trial was set for October 13, 1995 in Trento. The authorities needed some time to try to build up a case on this one as we shall see. On May 30th, when anarchists gathered in front of the Trento prison in solidarity with the imprisoned comrades setting off fireworks, 28 comrades were detained by the police and four were given expulsion papers banning them from the region.

On June 1, the second degree trial for the Rovereto trial took place. All the four imprisoned had their sentences reduced by 1 year 8 months, but Eva was again charged and sentenced to 3 years and 4 months in spite of the fact that she and the four comrades deny she participated in the robbery.

When the time for the first hearing of the trial dealing the two robberies in Ravenna, Trento in Italy came on October 13, 1995, the trial was postponed until November 14 because the judges “had a lot of work”. Then it was postponed again until December 12, at which time it was postponed until January 9, 1996.

In the meantime, the repressive machinations took a new turn. At dawn on November 16, 1995, Special Operations Units (ROS) of the Italian military police – on the order of the Roman public prosecutor, Antonio Marini – raided and searched the houses of a few dozen anarchists throughout Italy and the islands giving notice of investigations for some very serious crimes (“subversive association”, “armed band”, “attacks against public utility installations”, “complicity in robbery”, “possession of arms and explosives” and for some even “complicity in homicide”). The next day, anarchists who were already in prison on various charges were also searched and given notification with regard to the same investigations. Among these were a few comrades who had been imprisoned for a kidnapping which they had always declared they had nothing to do with.

Anarchists responded by publishing flyers and putting up posters in some cities on the very day of the searches, in order to denounce these latest repressive operations. But the extent of this operation was not yet

obvious.

A national manifesto dealing with Marini, the prosecutor behind the investigation, roused the interest of journalists, thus forcing Marini to issue an official communiqué. Thus, on January 3, 1996, articles appeared in most of the daily papers describing the investigated anarchists as kidnapers, rattling off a series of lies, and justifying it all through the existence of a mysterious “penitent”.

On January 9, the trial in Trento (for the robberies in Ravina) began again. At the conclusion of the hearing, the prosecutor of Trento, Bruno Giardina, let it be known that Mojdeh Namsetchi, a former girlfriend of Carlo Tesseri had been collaborating with the prosecutors of Rome and Trento for a few months, but said that for security reasons her questioning would have to take place at a distance. So the hearing was adjourned until January 16 in order to prepare the necessary tools.

On January 16, anarchists filled the hall, waiting for the farce to begin. Of course, the “penitent” began by claiming to have committed the robberies with the accused anarchists. The questions she was asked were mere prompts, requiring mainly yes and no answers. She claimed that three more anarchists also took part in the robbery: Guido Mantelli, Roberta Nano and Emma Sassosi. Proclaiming that she had never been an anarchist, she said that she committed the robbery “for love”. Already in this questioning there were some contradictions with a transcript of an interrogation supposedly carried out over two months earlier by Marini and Giardina (particularly, she showed ignorance of the meaning of words that she is reported to have used in the transcript). Throughout the questioning, the only thing she was able to keep straight was the names of people supposedly involved in the robberies. She seemed to be incapable of remembering anything else, or if she did, these “memories” conflict with known reality. It was obvious that she was poorly coached in a fictional account. But the judge was prepared to get the trial over with that day with the verdict the state would desire. Marini resorted to this young woman who was in dire straits at the time, because he could not find any anarchists willing to cooperate. The language he found in anarchist texts from those under investigation – individuality, informality, affinity – did not fit the picture he desired to paint.

From the time of the searches in November, 1995 through the end of this trial, anarchists kept up activity in protest – demonstrations, flyers, special publications, and other activities. One of the more creative ones was a traveling display of torture instruments that have been used from the middle ages up to today entitled “From Holy to Democratic Inquisi-

tion", that visited various cities in Italy from December 16, 1995 until the end of February, 1996. The text of a poster relating to this event is published below. Another example of the sorts of activities going on was the occupation on January 24, 1996, of the office of a Communist party newspaper described in a text below. There were various other materials spread and public interventions made throughout this period.

Meanwhile, on January 31, 1996, the last hearing of the trial against the anarchists for the two robberies was held. Anarchists from throughout Italy filled the courtroom. Using over-crowding as their excuse, a flying squad of the police launched a pursuit against anarchists in the corridors of the court and then in the streets, causing some injuries. In the meantime, in the courtroom, after Giardina's harangue, the defense attorneys dismantled the frame-up piece by piece, showing the political nature of the trial. Nevertheless, a conviction was necessary to guarantee the continued usefulness of the "penitent" in future trials against anarchists. So Jean Weir, Antonio Budini and Christos Stratigopulos were sentenced to 6 ½ years, and Carlo Tesseris was sentenced to 7 years. The sentence of January 31, based solely on the testimony of the "penitent", legitimated her word for us in further trials against anarchists. But there was still to be the appeal trial.

At this time, along with various initiatives by anarchists against the frame-ups, comrades in Greece held protests, and comrades in Germany set up funds to help comrades fight the situation.

For the next several months, there is little specific to report. Marini, along with prosecutors, Ionta and Vigna, continued the harassment of anarchists to try and find evidence for the heavy charges he had issued. Then on the morning of September 17, 1996, about 300 armed and masked members of the ROS raided about 60 houses, issued 29 arrest warrants, declared 39 others to be under investigation and imprisoned several anarchists. The charges included "armed gang" and "subversive association", along with numerous specific criminal charges including homicide and kidnapping. A few eluded their grasp, so that by December 20th, it was known that 14 anarchists were in prison, 4 were under house arrest, 3 were out on bail and 8 were living outside Italy as fugitives.

In the meantime, anarchists posted flyers, organized demonstrations and carried out a variety of actions against the repression. For example, On October 24, unknown anarchists broke into the Palace of the Great Guard in Verona and postered and graffitied all the flat surfaces leading to the cancellation of a public exhibition. The four anarchists under house arrest continued a hunger strike they began shortly after their arrests.

On December 4, 1996, some unknown anarchists broke into the Italian consulate in Malaga, Spain where they destroyed office equipment, stole some documents and left messages of solidarity with those being prosecuted in Italy. The statement claiming this action made the intentions very clear. About two weeks later, four people attempted to rob a bank in Cordoba, Spain. The failed robbery ended up in a chase and shootout in which two cops were killed. Three of the four arrested robbers – Claudio Lavazza, Michele Pontolillo and Giovanni Barcia were known anarchists, two of them from Italy. The three known anarchists were also charged with the break-in in Malaga for which no one had been arrested. Of course these charges were then brought into the Marini investigation as well, since the “organization” Marini claimed existed was supposedly international.

The appeal trial for the two robberies also came to an end in December. In this appeal, the prosecutor, hoping perhaps to get a confession or some form of cooperation from the four imprisoned anarchists, actually called for reduced sentences for the second robberies, but also to lower the chance of the reversal of the sentence. The defense attorneys pointed out the connection between this trial and the Marini trial, exposing the many contradictions in the penitent’s testimony and showing how the prosecutors were so intent on getting a conviction simply in order to validate this penitent for future use in the Marini and other trials against anarchists where little real evidence existed. The convictions were, nonetheless, upheld, though the sentences for this second conviction were reduced to two years for each of the four defendants.

The beginning of the hearings of the Marini trial perpetually got postponed – from December 16, 1996 to late January, 1997 to late March to May to early July. Marini claims the need for more investigations as the reason for these postponements.

Here I would like to take the time to go into more detail on the way in which Marini has built up his fairy tale. In 1993, Alfredo Bonanno and some other anarchists gave a series of public presentations in Saloniki, Greece. One of the talks, “Recent Developments in Capitalism” (later printed in *Anarchismo* #72 and available in English in the pamphlet *The Insurrectional Project*) included a section that when it was first written in Italian was entitled “*organizzazione informale*” or “informal organization”. Apparently there is no precise Greek translation for “informal”, so the title was changed to “*organizzazione rivoluzionaria anarchica insurrezionalista*” (“revolutionary anarchist insurrectionalist organization”) and the name was carried back into the printed Italian version (and the English

version). So here Marini found a name and acronym (ORAI) for the alleged “international criminal anarchist organization” of his fantasy. He further invented a history and an organizational structure. Marini and his investigators claim that an anti-militarist meeting that took place in Forlì, Italy in 1988 represented a historic split in the Italian anarchist movement between the “hard wing” and the Italian Anarchist Federation (FAI), that at that time, the FAI expelled the “hard wing”, and that from this “hard wing”, the ORAI was formed, a group that Marini claims can only be thought of as criminal, unlike the sincere, idealistic and peaceful FAI. The organization is furthermore, according to Marini’s fantasy, divided into two tiers. The open tier consists of periodicals, publishing houses, anarchist public spaces (anarchist squats and centers), solidarity groups such as the Anarchist Defense Committee (CDA) in Turin, web-sites and the like. Most of the activities of this tier are not illegal in themselves, but, according to Marini, provide the basis for the illegal activities of the other tier of the organization. The other tier is the clandestine tier, the small core of hardened militants who supposedly carry out the robberies necessary for funding the organization as well as doing bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and so on. Alfredo Bonanno is proclaimed to be at the head of this pyramid. So this is Marini’s fantasy. There is no need to point out how such an organizational structure would contradict the most basic of anarchist principles. But Marini neither knows nor cares about such things. His aim is to criminalize anarchists, and the structure of the fantasy organization he has dreamt up criminalizes even the publication of a paper or the posting of a flyer that expresses solidarity with those accused of specific crimes. This is no longer an expression of solidarity among comrades, but part of a conspiracy of a vast criminal organization.

Now to return to the events related to this situation.

Actually before the first hearing took place, in December 1996, two imprisoned anarchists, Pippo Stasi and Garagin Gregorian, issued a communiqué that in which they seemed to be claiming to start a new anarchist armed organization. And in early 1997, the editors of the anarchist weekly *Canenaro* decided to print this communiqué, which they interpreted as a proposal rather than a declaration of fact since there is obviously no opportunity for imprisoned anarchists to practical carry out such a project, along with their critique of it entitled “The Fullness of a Struggle Without Adjectives” which points out the necessity of rejecting all specializations including that of the specialized armed group. Their aim was to start a deep examination and discussion of the question. Unfortunately, instead, due in part to the pressures of repression but also to other cir-

cumstances, very few people were open to carrying such a discussion forward. Instead, a number of comrades began to make unfounded accusations against the editors of *Canenaro*, some even going as far as accusing them of dissociation (a reference to a practice in Italy in which certain people imprisoned for the insurgence of the 1970's would "dissociate" from their own actions and their comrades in exchange for lighter sentences, a concept which Antonio Negri helped to formulate), while others simply said that this was not the time to debate such matters. The state strategy of repression was clearly working on some levels, causing conflict among anarchists and lowering the level of discussion.

In April, 1997, two anarchist were arrested in France to be held until the French authorities made a decision about whether to extradite them or not. A month later, Massimo Passamani, accused of being the secretary-treasurer of the group, was arrested there as well. In the meantime, on April 25, a letter arrived at Radio Popolare in Milan (formerly a pirate radio station that was increasingly going commercial) claiming a bomb attack at the Palazzo Marino in Milan signed "Revolutionary Anarchist Action". The station turned the letter and a surveillance camera film of the person who brought it over to the police. A phone call clarifies that the attack was made in solidarity with the imprisoned anarchists and demanded their release. On June 20, a raid was made on the Anarchist Laboratory in Milan. Based on the very blurry video of a woman making the delivery, Patrizia Cadeddu, a woman who had been involved in anarchist activities since the early 1970's and one of the founders of the Anarchist Laboratory, was arrested in connection with the bombing. On July 2, the Laboratory was evicted, but the squatters chose to sit in.

Meanwhile, the preliminary hearings of the Marini trial began in earnest on July 1. Marini demanded the addition of new charges relating to the bank robbery in Cordoba, the attack on the Italian consulate in Malaga, Massimo Passamani's arrest, the bombing on April 25 in Milan, the anarchist use of the Internet, and anarchist publications.

On July 10, 1997 Radio Blackout, a pirate radio station in Turin received an anonymous letter containing an "informative note for internal use only relative to a possible investigative action to be carried due to anarchist destruction" written by the ROS. Dated December 19, 1994, this "informative note for internal use" summarizes the previous twenty years of investigations against anarchists and goes on to give some detail of a proposed investigation and frame-up that precisely parallels the Marini investigation. It speaks of the specific creation of Mojdeh Namsetchi into an acceptable "penitent" in order to use her to develop a case for a fan-

tasy organization of the sort described above. They speak of the need to link various unsolved illegal activities with known illegal activities of anarchists and with various anarchist publications. So the plan was already in place by the end of 1994. Radio Blackout exposed this on the radio and turned it over to defense lawyers, who brought it up in court.

Nonetheless, on July 18, the preliminary hearing concluded with a decision to take the case to court. Eighteen of the defendants would be tried for "subversive association", but not "armed gang". Ten were released with no charges. Thirty-eight were charged with "subversive association", "subversive association with the aim of terrorism", "armed gang" and "receiving stolen goods". The trial date was set for October 20, 1997.

On July 25 and then again on August 4, Radio Blackout was searched by the military police to collect information about the ROS note. In the second search they took an inkjet printer seeking to find evidence that the note was a forgery.

On October 20, 1997, the first hearing of the trial which dealt primarily with administrative matters took place. There were various actions of protest and resistance.

On November 1, Alfredo Bonanno and Emma Sassosi were released after a year in prison.

On December 8, 1997, the preliminary hearing of the anarchists arrested for the robbery in Cordoba, Spain took place.

On December 10, various individuals occupied the Italian National Tourism office in Paris, France to protest Massimo Passamani's arrest and detention there.

On January 13, 1998, during the second hearing of the Marini trial, the defense lawyers requested the release of imprisoned anarchists.

On January 18, the police made another raid on Radio Blackout seizing a computer, a printer and disks in the attempt to find evidence of a forgery of the ROS document. Of course, again nothing turned up.

On January 28, the Italian anarchist Angela Maria LoVecchio was arrested in the Netherlands for extradition to Italy.

In February of 1998, the CDA disbanded. On February 4, Massimo Passamani was released in Paris where he remained for the time being. Trial hearings continued.

In March, the repression broadened. On March 6, two squats in Turin were evicted. Three anarchists – Edoardo "Baleno" Massari, Maria Soleadad Rosa and Silvano Pellisero, were arrested and charged in connection with sabotage on the tracks of a high speed train line being built in the Val Susa valley. On March 7, there were riots and street-fighting in protest of

the evictions and arrests. On March 9, residents of El Paso Occupato, an anarchist occupied space in Turin, were charged with “illegal defense of a crime” for publishing a flyer in solidarity with the rioters. On March 15-17, there were demonstrations and blockades in Turin.

In the meantime, hearings of the Marini trial continued. Then on March 28, the body of Edoardo “Baleno” Massari was found hanged in his cell, an apparent suicide. On April 1, there was a national demonstration for him. On April 3, Edoardo’s funeral took place in the small town that he came from. His family, friends and comrades made it very clear that this was to be a private funeral for those who knew and loved him. Nonetheless, the flocks of journalistic vultures felt obliged to invite themselves. The anarchists came together and collectively kicked them out. In the process, one journalist, Daniele Genco – known for his friendship with the cops and particularly responsible for a smear campaign against Edoardo – was apparently injured. So on April 17, the anarchist Luca Bertoli was arrested for the beating Genco at the funeral. Two other anarchists, Arturo Fazio and Andrea (Drew) Machieraldo, were also being sought in connection with the so-called beating. On April 24, Luca was placed under house arrest.

In the meantime, on April 22, Silvano Pelissero was put in a maximum security facility to keep him at a distance from any solidarity demonstrations.

On April 26, thirteen people were convicted in Ivrea in connection with a demonstration that occurred years earlier in support of Edoardo Massari years earlier when he was in prison on other charges.

On April 28, the press headquarters in Turin was attacked with eggs.

On June 2, 1998, a few more “penitents”, the Sforza family, were brought in as witness. The Sforza family were apparently small-time gangsters facing hard time and willing to make a deal. They had been used several years earlier to convict anarchists in the Silocchi kidnapping. The anarchists in prison for this continue to deny any connection with the kidnapping. By this time Angela LoVecchio was back in Italy under house arrest.

On June 15, the four anarchists arrested in Cordoba, Spain were charged with more robberies in Salamanca, Albaceta and Zamora.

On July 1, Maria Soledad Rosa, who was under house arrest after her arrest on charges relating to the high-speed train line sabotage (including charges of “subversive association”), committed suicide.

On July 13, in a preliminary hearing, three people involved in Radio Blackout were scheduled to go on trial for forgery in April 1999.

On the days before Silvano Pellisero, from July 18 through 20, there were demonstrations involving blockades and the burning of garbage cans in solidarity with him. On July 28, his trial was scheduled for December 4.

On October 13, 1998, the Marini's prosecution began. He sought to include letter bombs that had occurred in recent months. He also sought to include a car bomb attack outside the Milan police station that had occurred several years earlier that was claimed by the Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia. He also tried to claim that the publications *Anarchismo* and *Provocazione*, both available publicly, were "semi-clandestine".

I don't have the precise date, but sometime during this period, the four anarchists who had been in prison for the robbery near Rovereto since 1994 were released.

Throughout 1999, the Marini trial continued with the prosecution presenting its case. Marini presented his theories. Documents were produced. Mojdeh Namsetchi and the Sforza family presented their testimony.

In addition, hearings continued in relation to the three anarchists who were charged with the beating of Genco. Throughout these hearings, statements of solidarity were made by anarchists pointing out repeatedly that the removal of the journalists from Edoardo's funeral was a collective action.

The anarchists on trial for the Cordoba robbery in Spain were sentenced as follows: Claudio, 49 years; Giovanni, 48 years; Giorgio, 48 years; Michele, 3 years. Then, in the fall of 1999, the first degree trial for the attack against the Italian vice-consulate in Malaga, Spain took place and the three anarchists were sentenced to 11 years each for this.

On October 8, the trial against the three people from Radio Blackout who were charged with falsifying the ROS document began.

In December 1999, the first degree of Silvano's trial came to an end and he was sentenced to 6 years, 10 months for "armed gang" and "possession of explosives" charges. Anarchists in the courtroom insult the court and prevent arrests. There is rioting outside the courtroom. Silvano was put under house arrest pending the second degree of the trial.

In the meantime, Patrizia Cadeddu's trial continued until January 2000, when, at the end of the third degree, she was sentenced to 3 years, 9 months for the delivery of the letter claiming the bombing at the Palazzo Marino in Milan.

In February, the first degree of the Marini trial went into its final stage

as Marini gave his final statement. This statement required five full-day sessions, and he ended by requesting sentences against 52 defendants – 30 for “armed gang”, 16 for “subversive association” and 7 for specific crimes. The sentences ranged from 8 months to life. In the course of his presentation he claimed that since for anarchists theory and practice are one, “intention is enough” to justify conviction.

On March 20, the first degree of the trial of Andrea, Arturo and Luca came to an end. Luca was sentenced to 3 years, 2 months; Arturo to 3 years, 6 months; and Andrea was absolved.

In the meantime, in Spain, the third degree court confirmed the sentences for the Cordoba robbery, but during the trial it came out that the cops, not the robbers, has shot the security guard. The comrades were locked in the harsh FIES units and have been active in the struggles against these units while inside.

The defense arguments in the Marini trial were spread over 6 sessions in March, April and May 2000, showing the absurdity of the prosecution's constructions and the untrustworthiness of the “penitents”. On May 31, the first degree court passed sentence. There were 39 acquittals and 13 convictions. All “armed gang” and “subversive association” charges were dropped. There were 13 convictions for specific crimes with sentences ranging from 1 year to life. Mojdeh Namsetchi was given a two year sentence, but it was suspended. Her conviction was necessary to maintain her credibility as a “penitent” witness, but clearly the state did not want to punish this useful (if poorly coached) tool. Those who were not already in prison for specific crimes were left “free” to await the second degree trial.

Though it was certain that Marin would appeal this outcome that was for less than the prosecution desired, he chose to wait for a number of reasons, hoping to build up a stronger case for the associative charges. In the meantime, one of the anarchists who had been included in Marini's persecution, Marco Camenisch, after many years in prison in Italy for attacks against nuclear facilities and other targets, was extradited to Switzerland to face charges there, and remains in prison in Switzerland.

It is quite evident that Marini was not finding it easy to build the kind of case he desired for the second degree trial. But the state hysteria about terrorism that was used to justify a wide variety of repressive measures after the attacks of September 11, 2001, provided an opportunity to play on certain fears. So in 2002, Marini made his appeal, and the second degree of the trial began in November. Marini tried a few ploys such as bringing Giovanni Barcia over from Spain, but, of course, the anarchist refused to cooperate. So Marini had nothing new to say. This didn't pre-

vent him from using five sessions to say it. He ended his speech with a call for sentences for 46 defendants including four life sentences. The defense presented its case in several sessions in December and January (2003), and in the process tore apart Marini's case. Nonetheless, on February 1, the court convicted five of the defendants on charges of "armed gang" and "subversive association" along with specific criminal charges. The individuals convicted were Francesco Porcu, Orlando Campo, Gregorian Garagin, Angela Maria LoVecchio and Rose Ann Scrocco. Rose Ann is currently a fugitive. In addition, Alfredo Bonanno was convicted for specific crimes, but without any associative charges. All other defendants were exonerated. The sentenced for those convicted ranged from 6 years and a 2000 Euro fine for Alfredo Bonanno to life in prison with 18 months of day-time isolation for Francesco Porcu.

While the second degree was going on, Horst Fantazzini and Carlo Tesseri, two of the anarchists charged in the trial were arrested. Horst had only recently been released after 25 years in prison. He died during the night of December 24-25. Apparently, it was a heart attack that immediately killed him, but when his family went to identify the body, they noticed that it was badly bruised, as if from a beating. Another case of the police eradicating a "dangerous individual".

Since the end of the second degree, new investigations of alleged armed bands and subversive associations, such as "Revolutionary Anarchist Action" and "International Solidarity", have been open. In addition, people who were involved with the anti-state communist group CRAC (now dissolved) and anarchists who know these people have also been put under investigation.

On March 6, 2003, the second degree trial of Luca and Arturo for the beating of Daniele Genco took place. People gathered in solidarity in front of the courthouse. At the end of the trial Luca was exonerated (only to be immediately re-arrested on other charges), but Arturo's sentence of 3 years, 8 months was confirmed. Arturo is currently fugitive. At the end of the trial, the comrades of Luca and Arturo set up a blockade in the middle of via Roma in Ivrea near the offices of the newspaper *La Stampa*. During the blockade, some people left writings on the walls inside the newspaper office. Large numbers of cops arrived and five people were taken away. Three of them were arrested with charges of resistance and insult. One of these three was also charged with the attempted theft of an officer's pistol. The two who were not arrested were released that evening. One of the arrested people were released on March 8, the other two on March 22. They are awaiting trial.

Finally , in April 2004, the last stage of the Marini trial took place before the court of cassation. Although it was expected that this court would say that the whole trial had to start over again from the beginning, instead the court chose to uphold the sentences from the second degree, bringing the trial to an end. Francesco Porcu and Gregorian Garagin were already in prison. Alfredo Bonanno, Orlando Campo, Angela Lo Vecchio and Carlo Tesseri were imprisoned. Orlando was quickly released because he had already served 8 years waiting for trial for a charge on which he was exonerated. Rose Ann Scrocco is still on the lam.

The Italian state is carrying out ongoing repressive activity in which investigations, searches, arrests and imprisonments keep anarchists quite busy simply in attempting to resist these machinations of the state. Nonetheless, the state has had problems in using "subversive association" and "armed gang" charges against anarchists whose methods of activity do not fit in with such organizational forms. Thus, quite recently, a magistrate in Milan complained in an interview that the Italian laws against subversive association and armed gangs were not appropriate for anarchists, because it was too difficult to convict them. He requested that the state pass a new law that would allow magistrates to arrest and convict anarchists even if they are not caught carrying out an attack of any sort. In other words, he is calling for the explicit criminalization of all anarchists. If he has his way, the Italian state would no longer have to resort to difficult undertakings like that of the Marini trial.

I. DOCUMENTS REGARDING THE ARREST AND TRIAL OF THE FOUR ANARCHISTS CHARGED WITH BANK ROBBERY

IN RESPECT OF THE LAW

Trained to live in respect for the law. Trained to obey orders, do our duty, carry out instructions, fulfill obligations, observe rules, submit to prohibitions, subject ourselves to morality.

That is how they want us: animals tamed and domesticated by superiors to be respected, televisions to be watched, taxes to be paid, politicians to be voted for, money to be earned. Robbed of a life that no longer has any value, spent in resignation while awaiting death. Or rebellion.

On Monday, 19th September near Rovereto (Trento), five anarchists were arrested, accused of armed robbery. Antonio Budini, Christos Stratiopoulos, Evangelia Tziutzia, Carlo Tesseri and Jean Weir are in prison, while investigators are preparing to build a castle of accusations in order to repress the real crime committed by the arrested: that of being anarchist. Guilty or innocent: for the law and its servants our comrades cannot be anything else.

For us who feel nothing but repugnance for Justice, it is enough to know that they are anarchists to give them our solidarity, to be their accomplices. Because every anarchist, every lover of freedom, lives their own life in the way and with the instruments they prefer, and if they need money they go and take it where it exists in abundance. Because every one of us chooses by themselves how, where and when to attack the society of oppression and those who support it.

Freedom is the weapon we will never tire of taking up.

Freedom is the crime we will never tire of committing.

Tuscan anarchists

NO ACT OF REVOLT IS FUTILE

On Monday September 19, 1994, five anarchist comrades were arrested (near Rovereto, Trento) following an armed robbery. A Robbery. A single act which manifests itself in the only logic possible for the dispossessed in a world based on sackage and exploitation. The only road open for to those who refuse the condition of hunger, submission, humiliation

and collaboration in their own misery: that of acting directly in the first person to reappropriate themselves of at least a part of what has been stolen from them.

Carlo Tesseri, Evangelia Tziutzia, Antonio Budini, Jean Weir and Christos Stratigopulos now find themselves in prison where they will presumably remain kidnapped for a good while. Their offense is their having broken the infamous rules of the social pact, worsened by the fact that they are revolutionary anarchists.

Christos, Eva, Antonio, Jean and Carlo are part of a particular dimension of the class struggle. They are anarchists and as such each has a heritage that others will have to reckon with. Not poor isolated misérables. Not prey for eventual attempts at recuperation or reinsertion, but individuals who think and act as part of the conscious rebellion which has as its perspective the destruction of exploitation, for a world without thieving exploiters. We will not allow the criminalization of their act. We claim it referring to its necessity and social validity. And so, they themselves must be criminalized.

To Carlo, Eva, Antonio, Jean and Christos we want to express our complete solidarity. In the first place for having with determination and lucidity attacked one of the multiple expressions of oppression; then because they are now constrained in even narrower cages than those in which we all live: punished by the enemy for the affront they have suffered, caged up by the system to preserve its infamy, segregated by the State in order to defend itself.

They will try to keep them locked up for months, perhaps years. They will try to make them repent or repudiate their dignity. Perhaps they will try to torture them.

They will try to carry out an operation of annihilation of the real people they have before them. With their schematics and the squalid content peculiar to their class they will continue along their road of manipulation in order to better manage the maintenance of consensus.

But they will not remain on this road for long. The struggle carried forward by the arrested comrades is also ours. The struggle will continue, extend, will move increasingly to the direct attack on all those who, individually or collectively, bear the responsibility both in the specific case and in all the fields of exploitation and oppression carried out by capital and the State.

On the other side, the apparatus of repression will also try to silence all those who in one way or another make the five comrades feel the warmth of solidarity; they will do everything they can (as always happens) to suf-

focate any ferment of rebellion, any move of insufferance, every word or bullet aimed against this system.

They might as well save themselves the effort.

It is open war against the enemy. There will be no turning back.

Anarchist and libertarian comrades of Bologna

DECLARATION OF THE ARRESTED ANARCHISTS

Comrades,

We are speaking out to clarify a few things that are dear to us.

First of all, we thank all those who have expressed their solidarity and those who will set about doing so through a common practice of struggle.

We are anarchist individuals moved by a common sentiment of freedom. Our personal need for money would never have found satisfaction in exploitation, either on our own backs or on those of others. We therefore decided to turn our attention to a bank, a structure whose responsibility we are all aware of.

The action we carried out should therefore be considered an act of re-appropriation for personal needs.

We tried, and it didn't work.

Immediately following our arrest in the Chizzola mountains near Trento on September 19, 1994, the local press began to pave the way for a frame up, that lost no time in taking form. In huge titles they presented us as an international gang of anarchist robbers, and to reinforce this thesis they presented us as the authors of two other bank robberies that had taken place on the same day in Ravenna, Trento, on July 29, 1994.

Our photographs were published in the local newspapers for days on end and were shown on regional TV on a number of occasions. Jean was presented as "wife of ex Red Brigades leader Alfredo Bonanno"*, in order, in our opinion, to wave the spectre of "terrorism" and back up their thesis of "robbery in a political framework".

Antonio received notification of confiscation of material seized from his home in Milan on September 19, as "required for investigations aimed at ascertaining the involvement of others in the robbery, and the participation of Budini himself in subversive organizations".

* Of course, as an anarchist Alfredo Bonanno would never have participated in the centralized, authoritarian, Stalinist Red Brigades, but the media isn't prone to accuracy. —editor

Since then Antonio, Carlo, Christos and Jean have formally been accused of the above robberies.

It is easy to deduce that they are preparing to saddle us with all their unsolved cases, and, by investigating in the sphere of our friendships, that they will try to involve other comrades in order to support their accusatory theses and inferences.

We are convinced of the need for mobilisation in order to break up this criminalisation, mobilisation not strictly limited to this case, but addressed towards other fields of the struggle.

Good work, comrades.

Antonio Budini
Carlo Tesseri
Christos Stratigopolis
Jean Weir

TO THOSE WITHOUT JUDGMENT

The daily spectacle of the alternating game of politics continues as a number of those in power find themselves accused by the very laws that they themselves impose to defend their privileges. The prevailing "thirst for justice" is no more than a gregarious sense of satisfaction felt by those who, incapable of getting rid of their rulers, are delighting in the misfortune befalling some of them due to the prevarication of other, new bosses who want to take their place. Accusers and accused compete in a motionless dance, demanding just laws, impartial judges, courts at the service of the citizen. On the other hand, there are individuals for who Justice means no more than a machine for domination and enslavement. In open revolt against all power, they feel only that they are hostages in the grips of the law.

Antonio Budini, Jean Weir, Christos Stratigopulos and Carlo Tesseri are four anarchists in prison following a robbery. The State is trying to have them convicted for another one. They are anarchists and that is evidence enough. In the war that everybody declares against those who do not bow down, anything goes. This new trial against Antonio, Jean, Christos and Carlo is due to take place in Trento on October 13.

May all the enemies of judges oppose the blows of the tribunal with the arm of solidarity.

Anarchist individualities

II. DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE MARINI INVESTIGATION

FRAME-UP

Anarchists are declared enemies of the state and of all institutional realizations to which it devotes itself in order to control and repress. This declaration of principle, even in its abstraction, is one of the essential characteristics of anarchism and has never been put into doubt.

The state knows quite well that anarchists are its uncompromising enemies, those who, more or less effectively, fight against it up to the end.

But it also knows that precisely because of this position of total, radical hostility, anarchists cannot find allies in their struggle against the state, except in the spontaneous participation of individuals who desire to change the oppressive conditions in which we all live.

Far from every game of power, diamond-hard in the crystalline purity of their ideas, anarchists have always been the thorn in the side of every state, from the most despotic to the most democratic; this is why police organs of all kinds have paid such particular attention to them.

And since the police and the judiciary know well that even though anarchists oppose seeking political alliances, they manage to gain the sympathy of those who have not definitively sold out, here these authorities are trying by every means to implicate anarchist in actions that often could not be their doing not so much for factual reasons, but rather due to basic choices and reasons of principle.

Anarchists stand by those who suffer oppression often without knowing how to react, and everyone knows it. This closeness is sometimes ideal, but at other times it gives a hand in the attack against the interests of the dominators. Sabotage is an easy example to follow, especially when it is carried out with simple means and is thus clearly within everyone's grasp.

Anarchists have sharp eyes for distinguishing the places where the realizations of domination are just beginning to become visible and strike there. Their way of proceeding is always easily recognizable because it is aimed at being reproduced in the most widespread manner possible. They don't have the pretext of distinguishing the sensitive hearts of the state or of laying claim to the competence to strike them. This disturbs.

Anarchists don't accept "grants" or support; through their struggle they find their own means by themselves. As a rule, having recourse to the aid of their comrades through subscriptions or otherwise. They don't love to

prostitute themselves. This is why they don't have respect for the sacredness of the property of the rich. When any one of them knocks at some bank's door for personal reasons, because she has so decided, if something goes wrong, he is quick to pay the consequences. Living free has its costs. This disturbs.

But there are some things that they are not prepared to do. They are not prepared to slaughter people indiscriminately, as states do in war as well as in times of so-called "peace". They would never accept the mere idea of an indiscriminate slaughter of persons.

In the same way anarchists are against power, any prison, even that which kidnappers inflict on those they kidnap in hope that someone will decide to pay the sum demanded as ransom. Locking up a human being is a humiliating practice.

Another thing anarchists refuse is a clandestine armed structure, equipped with an organizational chart, working rules, political program and all the rest. That which common language insists on describing as "armed band" is very far from the idea that anarchists have of their conflict with the state, a conflict that, although it may even be violent – and thus armed – at times, will never be rigidly arranged according to norms that are ultimately borrowed from the very structure that one wants to fight against.

All the frame-ups that have been built up against anarchists over the last few decades have thus followed two lines: on the one hand the organs of the state have kept in mind the extreme danger of a model of life and action that, if it were to be generalized sooner or later and become sufficiently known, might overturn the present order of the society of the sleeping and consenting; on the other hand they have tried to accuse anarchists of being responsible for slaughters, kidnappings, armed band: precisely the things that anarchists could not choose to do.

But why does the state try to "use" anarchists? Because with their way of being that opposes every compromise and all political connivance with current and future rulers, they lend themselves to being used in this way. Who will they find to defend them? Who will espouse their cause? No decent person could do so, and it is really in order to keep decent people quiet that the state controls, robs, slaughters and all the rest.

Of course, the state could be content with putting anarchists in prison by simply accusing them of anti-social behavior, of holding to a dangerous doctrine, of contempt for institutional organs, of support for various crimes, of incitement to revolt. Dozens and dozens, if not hundreds, of trials of this sort have been held and there have not been serious sen-

tences: from a few months to a few years.

But anarchists disturb the gilded tranquility of conformists; they might form a little flame that makes the fire flare up, and with times that rush by it is necessary to keep a strategy ready that is sufficient for putting them completely out of play.

Here comes a Mr. Antonio Marini, deputy prosecutor in the region of Rome, into the spotlight. A gentleman with sharp teeth and a fertile brain for inventing stories. He has the experience of trials such as those for the Moro case or for the attack against the pope behind him, thus there is no person more suited than he is for what is needed: he could never ever understand how anarchists reason and of what – in legal terms – they are firmly responsible.

So here is the distinguished Marini riding in the wake of his illustrious predecessors and constructing his theorem: anarchists are responsible for thousands of actions against the state and its economic offshoots that have spread throughout the national territory in the past few years. Now, since the theorem is shaky, how can it be shown that a few anarchists knocked down hundreds of pylons or burned Mr. Berlusconi's Standa subsidiaries? It can't be done. Thus, it is necessary for him to place them in the middle of much different, larger matters. There are no slaughters within his reach (in the future, you never know, we will see!), but there are kidnappings. Here he is then to attribute the truly amazing act to them of having had a hand in all the most important kidnappings of the past few years. What does it matter if anarchists are against any form of imprisonment: the good Marini does not know this. The theorem stated, seasoned with the corollary of the armed band, he even finds a young woman who maintains that she knows them, the anarchists, a few of them; that she knows them well and has even done a robbery with a few of them. The rest will come of itself. Let's go, gentlemen, starting from yet another dramatization.

In their time, there were the bombs at the trade fair in Milan. Some Milanese anarchist comrades were accused of slaughter and held in prison for almost a year. At the trial, everything was deflated. Frame-up.

Then the slaughter of the Fontana plaza, with dozens of deaths. Anarchists were held responsible. The murder of Pinelli, thrown from a window of the Milan police station. Today, after a quarter of a century, the same judiciary system has had to admit that the secret services of the Italian democratic state placed the bombs. Frame-up.

In 1980, dozens of arrests of anarchists throughout Italy who were accused of robbery, armed band and insurrection against the state. The in-

vestigation didn't get past the preliminary stage. Frame-up.

From 1984 to 1988, at least four attempts to involve anarchists in the affair of the high tension pylons cut down nearly everywhere throughout Italy. In so many trials in the various degrees from first to cassation, not one condemnation. Frame-up.

In 1989 the attempt to construct a subversive association after the arrest of some anarchist comrades in the course of an attempted. The judiciary action came to nothing. Frame-up.

In 1991, sensational operations aimed at implicating a supposed group "Anarchismo e Provocazione" in the Silocchi kidnapping. The group is nonexistent, though for some time a magazine called *Anarchismo* and a paper called *Provocazione* have existed. The attempt to give life to this monstrous machination fails. Frame-up.

In 1994, a search in Florence of the editorial space of the anarchist weekly *Canenero* (electronic bugs were discovered in the same place a little earlier) and the delivery of three notices of investigation to as many comrades for crimes related to incendiary attacks against Belusconi's Standa. In this case as well the inquiry never got beyond the investigative phase. Frame-up.

GUILTY OF SOLIDARITY

More police constructions and searches at the expense of anarchists

We would like so much to talk with you about beautiful things, love without calculation, children playing noisily, the desertion of all obedience, relations free from constraint, the factories of harm closed forever, money being burnt; in short of full life manifesting itself.

But it is repression with all its arrogance that leads us to speak.

A few months ago, in several Italian cities including Rovereto and Trento, there was a series of searches at the expense of a good number of anarchists. The pretext was that of a fanciful "subversive association" with "the aim of terrorism" to which those who were searched supposedly belonged in the judgment of the men of Judgment. Obviously, since anarchists have no organization of this kind, so much the less with leaders, hierarchies and all the rest, the operation came up with a handful of flies (i.e., with an extension of the investigations). Now, seeing that the "subversive association" does not exist, a gang – this one armed – of judges in Rome have decided to repeat the searches. So, at dawn, on November 16, in Naples, Rome, Florence, Pinerolo and here in Rovereto, five dwellings were turned upside-down by military police, *faithful through*

the ages. But this time they actually added “armed gang” to the crimes charged: “robbery” and “attack against public utility installations”. As always, pounds of books, papers and diaries, taken together with usual computers – nothing more.

In order to avoid having the zeal of the men of law extend to the attempt at incrimination for “slaughter of infants” or “international traffic in organs” next time around, we will take this chance to explain what our real crime is: solidarity. Solidarity, in spite of all repression and criminalization, towards anyone who wants complete freedom.

Power would like it if we kept silent about the arrest of any individual who does not allow him or herself to be governed, or better yet if we distanced ourselves. But this has not happened in thousands of instances, just as it did not happen when four anarchists who had no money and were hostile to exploitation lightened the coffers of a bank end up in prison. “Here it is!” shriek the servants of authority, “It is an entire armed gang; they are all robbers!” Guilty of solidarity; this is the sentenced announced.

A simple crime, as you can see, of a single word. A crime that we will never grow tired of committing.

Roveretan anarchists

TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF COURAGE

On the night of January 18 [1996] unknown persons painted the main door of Rovereto town hall red and fixed a large parchment above it with the following words:

To the men and women of courage,

With this page, affixed on the doorway of a building in which every day others decide that you cannot decide but can only obey, we say to you:

They are trying to make you believe that your enemies are not the tyrants, bosses, exploiters and those who defend them armed to the teeth with machine guns, uniforms, televisions and newspapers. They are trying to make you believe that your enemies are the individuals who want to decide for themselves, and therefore rebel; that we are your enemies.

Twenty years ago they told you that we were the ones who placed bombs in the public squares, whereas now you know well that it was the state that acted in this way in order to frighten everyone and suffocate every tension toward freedom and re-

volt. Today, a judge in Rome named Antonio Marini is telling you that we are a band of kidnappers and a clandestine organization. But you know us, you have heard us speak out and act against all prisons, and for the complete self-management of our lives.

Do not let these infamous lies pass. Repression denies every dissonant voice, every proud gesture of solidarity.

We do not have gangs to which one belongs. All parties, including "revolutionary" ones, disgust us. We want to sink all the galleons of power, and our crew has nothing to do with captains and flags.

Rebel on your own and forget about us.

Anarchist pirates

The fact that on January 3 the entire national press hurled itself in unison against the anarchists, copying without scruples the police bulletins from the Prosecutor's Office in Rome, couldn't have passed unnoticed.

In Bologna, Rovereto, Trento, Florence and Verona on January 7 and 8, banners appeared in city centers, on monuments, scaffolding and bridges against the Roman public prosecutor Antonio Marini and against the frame-up in act against the anarchists.

During the night between January 10 and 11, someone wrote on the wall of the Courts in Bologna "Fire to the Courts" and "Fire to the military police" signed with the symbol of anarchy. A few days later a number of anarchists blocked the doors of the Surveillance Court with silicone, preventing access, and left some slogans: "Freedom for Camenisch" and "Free everyone".

In Florence, late in the morning of January 18, a few hundred leaflets entitled "Before retirement" were thrown from the Giotto belfry in Duomo square.

Graffiti against the dirty work of the judiciary appeared more or less throughout Italy. In Turin in particular slogans were written at the editorial offices of *Il Manifesto* [a Communist party newspaper] on January 24, including messages such as "*Manifesto* servants of the masters".

AGAINST THE NEW INQUISITION

Today, January 25 [1996] at about 10am, the editorial offices of the *Manifesto* [a communist newspaper – ed.] in Rome were occupied. Like the rest of the press, this paper was responsible for repeating carbon copy police reports and thus supporting the repressive frame-up orches-

trated by the magistrates Antonio Marini and Bruno Giardina at the expense of the anarchist movement.

We are present in the center of the capital, all the potential components of a single great criminal project, brought out for a day from clandestinity, without bazookas, dynamite, carnival masks, helicopters and submarines.

It all began on September 19, 1994 when, surrounded by military police with the help of police dogs and helicopters, four robbers of the Rural Bank of Serravalle di Trento were captured. Immediately afterwards, there was a sensational discovery: it is Jean Weir, Antonio Budini, Christos Stratigopoulos, and Carlo Tesseri – an “international gang” of anarchist?

What better occasion for the public prosecutor of Florence Pierluigi Vigna, who has pursued any anarchist who came within his reach without respite, to orchestrate a scenario that connects this and other robberies, knocked-over pylons, kidnappings, car bombs to the existence of a criminal band of those troublesome subversives whose visions of the world and of life are far too distant from the constituted order and from profit?

A few dozen anarchists are investigated through out Italy after Marini, the Roman magistrate prompted by Vigna, himself takes on various investigations spread throughout the national territory with the aim of eliminating at the root the inconveniences that spread like an oil stain.

Still they have a problem: there is not a bit of evidence that confirms the existence of such a gang. And this is where, with the aid of a marshal ready to redeem the former flame of one of those arrested, the “penitent” of the situation originates. The “penitent” doesn’t know anything, but this matters little to the magistrates and police who instruct her as necessary about the basic “revelations” to make. And then anarchists are always an easy target for Them: if you throw them inside there is no danger that anyone will protest either in the streets or in Parliament. No one would be ready to defend them: whoever does is surely one of them and thus can be investigated.

On the other hand, evidence is not what matters, but rather images. Let’s put it this way: seeing and considering that by tomorrow we could all be in prison because we are different, we might as well break loose now. Let’s lay claim to the immediate liberation of all prisoners, to the extinction of the state, to Life.

Anarchists

EVERYWHERE

We will be everywhere.

Four anarchists - Antonio, Christos, Carlos, Jean - are arrested following a robbery. The state has decided that the robbery is to be multiplied by three. Two unresolved cases supply the material necessary. A little girl who does not even remember the instructions the judges gave her, invents having participated in 2 robberies herself. She remembers nothing, but already she involves another three anarchists.

Judges Vigna and Marini would like to use the same girl to transform anarchist publications and initiatives, as well as the thousands of attacks which anonymous hands have realized wherever the structures of domination and poison exist, into an armed gang with vertices and organization charts: The state sees its own reflection in the mirror. The face has already led to the sentencing of comrades in first degree. On November 7th in Trento, the appeal is due to take place.

The macabre dance repeats itself.

In the face of this spectacle of power and death, the only living elements are our comrades and the solidarity that links them. The courts could not contain this solidarity. It went beyond them, towards freedom, revolt, joy.

Now our comrades will be put on show again like animals in cages, sacrificial figures on a stage that turns them into passive spectators, consumers of another infamous buffoonery. The script would have us turn up there again.

Judges, the game is clear: Everyone into the court, everyone putting on a mask.

The defect is simple: It is called life.

You want defense, you will get attack.

You want water, you will get fire.

We will be the ones to play. Everywhere.

J. Weir - Autumn 1996

UNCONTROLLABLES

*Forward everybody! And with hand and heart, word and pen, dagger and gun,
irony and curse, theft poisoning and arson, let us make war on society!*

—Joseph Dejaque

Magistrates are showing off. They give orders and the troops in uniform and scrap iron invade our homes in the search for proof and expedients

to imprison us, then they pose in the limelight to explain their action, to wrench consensus, to end up "in triumph" as in the case of the assistant public prosecutor in Rome, Antonio Marini.

But what are they looking for?

They tell us they are looking for elements to demonstrate the existence of an armed clandestine organization. This is why they have arrested dozens of anarchists all over Italy.

An armed gang?

Too poor a thing: it could not contain our excessive intentions. Too narrow a thing: it would only constrict our uncontrollable explosions. Anyone who rises up against her own and others' oppression does not seek leaders, different directives, other cages to take the place of this society, nor do they seek members.

The impatient one who rebels daily is not a reasonable person, nor full of good sense; he always creates a sense of uneasiness. Those who instead are careful not to do so live quiet lives: if any instinct were to push them to an excess of passion, reason would quickly persuade them that it is in their own interest to cast such foolish aspirations aside.

Anyone who wants to enjoy freedom intensely, to savor it, will always find herself faced with a uniform prepared to prevent her, but he will also encounter many passionate relationships of complicit affinity.

Antonio Marini is showing off.

He does not realize what his actions will provoke: He, who only associates with regimented people like himself, does not know that anyone who does not fear the unknown is free to choose the tools she prefers, according to individual circumstances and attitudes, without limits.

Anarchists

REPENTANCE IS FOR SALE IN THE LAW'S BAZAAR

Every state in the world is based on the same foundation: the exploitation of their inhabitants and the degradation of the individual. They more or less openly wage constant war against the enemies of their power and those who reject their authority. Every state needs a judicial apparatus to silence and imprison uncompromising individuals, rebels and fighters in love with freedom.

On September 16, 1996 one of the hugest waves of repression against a portion of the anarchist scene took place: a grotesque frame-up against those individuals who break out from the state's rules in order to manage

their lives for themselves. Against those who take what they need today without putting up with exploitation by the gears of the system. Against those who understand solidarity to be more than just an idea.

Anarchist Solidarity is not a political program. It flares up in each heart, wherever an anarchist is in dock, in whatever part of this world, for whatever reason. Anarchist solidarity expresses itself in direct action – in accordance with the ideas and by the specific means of each individual.

The picture of a free anti-authoritarian society is a nightmare for every judge and every servant of the state, bringing an end to their power. That means that they also have to jail every uncompromising individual in love with freedom – as long as it works, as many as possible!

They are looking for strategy to accomplish this: all the rebels were accused of being members of an “armed subversive organization”. This is exactly what the Italian prosecutors Marini and Ionta have tried to do. Their construction is based on testimony from a false “repentant” girl, who must serve as chief witness though she is not able to give concrete evidence of the things she says.

We are not interested in any of the pretexts of the state’s servants – they will always side with power and against freedom!

A LETTER FROM GUIDO MANTELLI AND ROBERTA NANO

To all comrades:

In anticipation of the trial that is beginning at the end of October [1997] in Rome, in which we are defendants, along with several other comrades accused of belonging to a group called “O.R.A.I.” (or whatever other name the prosecutors decide to give us at various times), we feel that it is important to make some of our thoughts public. It is certainly not our intention to waste time trying to explain to judges and cops what anarchism means to us. Or the reasons behind our anti-authoritarian thoughts and actions. In regard to the accusations for which we are being tried, let’s not waste time: this group does not exist. Let this be clear in case of our eventual use of certain instruments or organizational techniques, since, and we will never tire of saying this, we believe it is a natural consequence of our desire for freedom that we search and make use of experimentation in methods, ways, arms, relationships and structures that will give us results in our revolutionary fight.

Organizations with dull names such as “O.R.A.I.” can only exist in the stuffy thoughts of men of power. Taking this into consideration, we be-

lieve that this trial is nothing more than a political trial, the outcome of which is not played out in the courtroom, but rather in the battle between the interest of power and the effective answer of all our comrades inside prison as well as those outside to these repressive maneuvers.

In light of the sort of justice and the political reasons for this trial, we can expect that we will be imprisoned as has happened in many other instances even including recent ones (the Silocchi trial). Even though the lawyers will try to denounce the accusations. But since not all comrades find themselves with the same ends, starting from the arrests in September 1996, we don't consider it possible to find ourselves in a collective position for confronting the situation that has occurred (a thing that we would have preferred); it seems that we must express our position in light of the eventual legal defense that will represent us in court.

At our request, the lawyers can only be used when it comes to getting dates and judiciary information and for the presentation of motions and other resources which the state only allows to specialized persons, such as attorneys. We certainly cannot count on them to believe in our political position or to guarantee a favorable verdict. Therefore, not desiring to delegate, and considering that it is technically impossible to discuss the technical aspects with attorneys without the possibility of giving control to an operator in the sector of absolute authority to decide what would be in our best interests, we ask that through the defense committee, in agreement with our comrades and relatives, we keep the lawyers updated in case of eventual recourse and appeal which could be favorable to the situation of the defendants.

Therefore, no "individualized" treatment and no effort by an attorney to give the courts any interpretations of our ways, methods and manner of thought.

We believe that the holding of the other trial can only represent one of the many mobilizations against the repressive attack of which we are the object. A momentary fight to be revealed outside the courts through an initiative of solidarity with the indicted comrades and through criticism of the democratic regime.

It is in this atmosphere, in the moments of struggle, that we really decide our fate. To all our comrades, our strongest revolutionary hug.

P.S. In one way or another, we would like this to circulate as much as possible among all the people involved in the mobilization against the frame-up constructed by Marini.

III. DOCUMENTS CONCERNING RELATED EVENTS

STATEMENT ABOUT THE ATTACK ON THE ITALIAN VICE-CONSULATE IN MALAGA, SPAIN

We have occupied the vice consular offices in Malaga, Spain, arms in hand, attacking a center of the Italian state in a foreign country. This is proof that the interests, structures and representatives of power can be struck wherever they show themselves. We are well aware that borders will not divide or differentiate the instruments of repression, and this is why the Italian state is just a part of the criminal project that is the United Europe. The United Europe of multinational capital, of Interpol, of judicial cooperation. The United Europe that will build barriers of even more significance between the participants in the management of social-economic power and those outside of it. The United Europe that will prepare the terrain for repressing the movements that might spoil the party, with sterile technology or savage brutality, depending on the circumstance. For years, the judicial apparatus has played a precise role in the restructuring of power. On the one hand offering a new credibility to the new dominant institutions through campaigns against corruption or the so-called "crimes of state", comedies that only serve to establish a new equilibrium of government and to safeguard the illusion that in the democratic system even the ruling class is accountable before the law. On the other hand, by means of the armies of guard dogs and informers, more or less professional police collaborators, increasing the repressive terrorism against those who do not adapt to the democratic cages.

We think that the revolutionary movement cannot keep its arms crossed before the old and new strategies of the capitalist regime. We are acting in this direction, as revolutionaries without mediation – with strength. We do not consider ourselves a vanguard of any political-social structure and even less the representatives of other people or things; we act only for ourselves and our path of liberation and self-determination. We act in this way, selecting without limits the methods and instruments we consider most effective in the struggle in course. For these reasons we are on the side of anyone who fights against authority in any place that it manifests itself, and we hope that in the near future more voices of freedom will grow everywhere with greater energy.

—*Corazones Libres*

STATEMENT OF SILVANO FROM BUSSOLENO

TO THE CIVIL SOCIETY, TO THE ANARCHIST COMRADES, TO THE GREENS, REDS, BLACKS, TO THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING OR NOTHING, TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT INTERESTED AT ALL IN WHAT HAPPENS AROUND THEM, TO EVERYONE AWARE OF CHANGING THE COURSE OF HISTORY.

NOVARRA, MAY 5, 1998

The undersigned Silvano is the son of Bruno who was a 15-years-old partisan order-taker (communist partisans who fought in northern Italy in 1943-1945 against the nazi-fascists of the Salo republic) in the Balmafol-Combe-Caserme Sevine area. He never lined with communists, socialists or other political parties. NOR WAS HE AN ANARCHIST. He never gave back the fire weapons he used during the partisan guerrilla war and he always kept them to defend himself and his family from any assailants – Germans, fascists or communists. In 1981, he was jailed just because he was found guilty of possessing these weapons and he died in the hospital in 1983 because of bad health.

I confirm and point out that I am an anarchist, rebel and individualist. This statement concerns me and not my two comrades Soledad and Edoardo, who were accused and imprisoned for the same crime as me.

I would like to remind you that the crimes we are charged with include subversive association, assault against public buildings with explosives, robbery.

I point out that I am incompatible with any way of life you have, with the wage system, with authority and ownership (which always comes from exploitation). I am against the TAV (the high speed train) in ITALY, FRANCE OR GERMANY or elsewhere. I'm against tourism in the snow-fields of Val di Susa or Valle d'Aosta, as well as on the Cancun beaches in Mexico or in the CLUB MED villages, wherever they are located.

I am against any use of nuclear power as well as the exaggerated use of cars.

I am opposed and incompatible with any form of authority, from the judge who discharges or charges with a crime according to his whim, to the policeman doing his job, the head foreman and the school teacher.

In your civil, democratic society, founded on a hypocritical peace I cannot see a possible space for me to live. I can see no place for dialogue with your majority that has mainly turned its back on the earth for the sake of that shame that justifies any slaughter: PROGRESS!!!

I deny any involvement in the assaults carried out in Val di Susa or other places, I deny being involved in a group called GREY WOLVES (LUPI GRIGI that has claimed some assaults in Val di Susa and has nothing to do with the Turkish GREY WOLVES).

The idea of being active in an organization does not comply with the principles of anarchism.

I end this short statement as part of my duty to my comrades who showed me their solidarity.

I do not want to justify my positions before the so-called civil society that accuses me of eco-terrorism.

I do not recognize any power and authority to judge my way of living.

I shall take note of the sentence passed against me, which shall only be executed owing to a greater numeric and technical force.

Everyone may think and do what s/he wants. Those who want it can stay by me and who do not feel like it can stay away from me as if I were a demon coming from who knows which hell of society.

SILVANO

No surname as it is not important.

Family names are only used for filing.

SOLEDAD IS DEAD. NO CELEBRATIONS PLEASE.

Soledad hanged herself (we don't have any reason to doubt it) on Friday night (between July 10 and 11, 1998) in Benevagienna (Italy), where she was living under house arrest in the community "Sotto i ponti". Her body has been taken to the hospital of Mondovì, as required by a magistrate who was very upset because of the unexpected interruption of his fishing-day. Actually we don't even know his name. Many journalists, as usual, arrived immediately but they were chased away.

Soledad was an anarchist 22 years old and she was Argentinean. She was in Italy since September 1997. During the investigation of the sabotage against the High Speed Train Project (TAV) in Val Susa, she was accused of being a member of an armed organization called "lupi Grigi" (Grey Wolves) which claimed itself as responsible for only one such sabotage (there have been dozens of them and almost all happened before Summer 1997). She was arrested with two other anarchists, Silvano Pellissero and Edoardo Massari, at the beginning of March, 1998. The charges were reduced after the suicide in jail of Edoardo Massari.

Soledad then obtained house arrest in Benevagienna; Silvano was moved instead to the high security prison of Novaro. At the moment he is

at his 20th day of hunger-strike asking for house arrest and in order to know the date of his trial.

The magistrate who holds the inquiry about the sabotage against the TAV (the inquiry was supposed to finish on May 7th) is Maurizio Laudì.

The famous “arsenal” found in the cellar of the Casa Occupata in Collegno (Turin), where Silvano, Soledad and Edoardo lived, has never been shown to the public and no expert evidence has ever been presented.

The Media are working to construct a part for Silvano, describing him as an agent provocateur.

Right now there are no public demonstrations scheduled, and we hope there won't be, given the results of the mass demonstrations held on April 4th: just a sort of exorcism after which nothing really meaningful happened.

Let's leave apart any mere conventional form act. Anyone wanting to express his thoughts and sentiments and rage should simply do it, in the place and the situation where one lives, in one's own times and ways.

There is nothing to add and nothing to be shouted out. Move.
(think globally and act locally)

El Paso Occupato

Né centro né social... né squat

Via Passo Buole 47

10127 – Torino – Italy

A STATEMENT

With regard to the preliminary hearing that will be held in Ivrea on July 8 in relation to the actions that occurred in Brosso during the funeral of Edoardo Massari, we consider it an opportunity to clarify our positions.

Beyond the various judicial and journalistic declarations and farces on the various responsibilities some of us could have had during the funeral, useful only to the repression for sending away “inconvenient personages” from the Ivrea scene, we think it is opportune to drive a few things home.

We went to Brosso to salute our comrade, killed by cops, judges and journalists, and we wanted to do it without the presence of his murderers. This could not be done because, even during the funeral, the inquisitors wanted to show their omnipresence and omnipotence with dozens of police and journalists.

We were insulted and we were provoked – the very presence of these murderers was and is an insult and a provocation – and in consequence we defended ourselves. To defend ourselves and send the vultures away was the only response possible and we have made it.

Those who kill and imprison every day, those who support and promote wars, those who sell death and destruction have described the happenings at Brosso as savage violence, cowardly lynching, etc.

Throughout the repressive and slanderous campaign, they have sought to separate us into "good" and "bad". Here it is, we are here to say that they have not succeeded in doing this, that solidarity is stronger than their courts and that the only thing repression has succeeded in obtaining is the increase of our enmity toward this wretched existence and its supporters.

We will continue to hold forth our ideas and practices with dignity and certainly neither judges nor journalists will make us change our ideas.

We emphasize once again our will to refuse every separation between "good" and "bad".

Luca Bertola

Andrea Macchieraldo

Arturo Fazio

And others present at Baleno's funeral

FOR A WORLD WITHOUT JACKALS

A march in solidarity with Luca and Arturo, Thursday March 6, 2003, 9:00, at the Palace of justice of C.so Vittorio Emanuele, third section of appeal

"Injustice has a name, a surname and an address"

On March 6 in the Court of Appeals of the Tribunal of Turin, the second degree trial in which two anarchists, Luca and Arturo, are charged for events that occurred in Brosso five years ago during the funeral of Edoardo Massari will take place. Edoardo was an anarchist accused of sabotage against the high speed train project and found dead in his prison cell in Vallette, suicided by judges, police, journalists and politicians.

Luca and Arturo have been accused by the inquiring magistrates of being among the principle people responsible for the aggression against Daniele Genco: journalist, police confidante and always among the greatest accusers of Edoardo. For this, our two comrades were sentenced by the court in Ivrea – after a trial that was, to say the least, surreal – to 3 years and 2 months and 3 years and 6 months in prison respectively

We are not interested in discussing the fundamentals of this trial here. Instead we want to claim in the act in Brosso an act of justice, an act of collective resistance, against those who have accused, discredited and offended our comrade in the pages of the newspapers; against those who

daily insult and sully millions of exploited people, men and women who are kept from having a voice.

Today, so that the role of journalists in the justification of war, repression in the streets, racism might be evident to everyone, today more than ever again a little act like that of Brosso is an indication, an example to follow. Therefore, we invite those that still have a heart and a mind to demonstrate their solidarity with Luca and Arturo, but above all, we invite anyone to come with us who is filled with disgust every time that s/he opens a newspaper to give their contribution to liberating the world from the pack of jackals and from the terrorism of Information.

Solidarity to all prisoners, to all the victims of judges in every part of the world, to all those who suffer journalistic and police terrorism.

STRATEGIES OF REPRESSION

One of the strategies used most frequently by the state in order to suppress anarchist revolt is that of keeping us constantly preoccupied with dealing with investigations, searches, police harassment, trials and imprisonment. Frame-ups become a regular part of their repertoire, because even when they don't get convictions (and this is fairly frequent, see the text "Frame-up", p.20), they have kept certain "dangerous elements" busy dealing with the judicial system they despise.

In Italy, the authorities have used this strategy for quite some time, perhaps the most infamous being the Fontana plaza massacre (Milan, 1969) carried out by state agents and blamed on anarchists, one of whom (Giuseppe Pinelli) was killed in a "fall" out of a fourth story window in the police station. More recently the authorities in Italy have tended to simply try to pin unsolved crimes on arrested anarchists.

With the so-called Marini trial, they have taken a more sophisticated approach. They have invented a fictional criminal anarchist organization with two tiers: the larger above-ground tier consisting of publications, presses, occupied centers and so on; and the clandestine portion, the armed gang. Using this fictional construction, state prosecutor Antonio Marini charged dozens of anarchists with "subversive association" and "armed gang" (and a few with crimes related to actual events). The only evidence for the "subversive association" and "armed gang" charges are the letters, periodicals, e-mails, conversations and visits among those charged.

Because these charges (particularly that of "subversive association") are, in fact, not very defined, they give the state an ongoing sword to hold over anarchists' heads. If one trial fails, new investigations can be opened, and the Italian authorities keep on opening investigations involving raids, searches, bugging, harassment – all the usual police tactics. Even if the number of convictions that these charges succeed in bringing about is low, this process can easily lead comrades to focusing their energy on self-defense rather than attack against the social order. When this occurs, the strategy of the state has been successful.

There are two specific strategies I want to go into a bit more here. First is that of pinning additional unsolved crimes on anarchists arrested for a specific act. This strategy can clearly lead to much higher sentences for those on trial. It was used here in the trials of Free and Critter when the unsolved arson at the Tyree Oil Company was added to the attack at the Romania car lot. Free, in particular, has suffered from this, receiving a 23

year sentence, so this is not a thing to be taken lightly. As anarchists, of course, we do not accept the “guilty-innocent” dichotomy of the state legal system. Nonetheless, it is important to attack the state strategy of frame-up through unrelenting solidarity and counter-information.

The other strategy I want to go into a bit more is that of the use of loosely defined associative crimes in order to justify investigations, harassment and prosecution. The specific laws being used in the Marini trial (and other investigations and trials going on against revolutionaries in Italy right now), the law against “subversive association” and “armed gangs” don’t have a precise equivalent in the United States. Up until the USAPATRIOT act went into effect, the main way avenues for prosecuting radicals for association would be through conspiracy laws or laws relating to aiding and abetting, and these required some clear evidence of actual association for carrying out a specific crime. The Italian laws do not require such specific evidence, but do require evidence for the existence of the organization of association. (As the Milanese magistrate mentioned on page 15 said, this is why it is so difficult to successfully convict insurrectionary anarchists on these charges). The USAPATRIOT act opens the door for far looser associative charges. First of all it gives ‘terrorism’ such a loose definition as to be virtually meaningless. An unpermitted demonstration, a wildcat strike or a simply act of vandalism could easily be defined as ‘terrorism’ by the guidelines of this act. And the additional concept of ‘aid to terrorism’ – defined in even looser terms – creates such a loosely defined category of associative crime that it could easily provide the basis for the development of a similar strategy here is the Italian authorities have been using.

As yet, the authorities here do not perceive anarchists as a significant enough threat to focus the kind of energy on that one sees in the events in Italy. Nonetheless, the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force in Portland, Oregon lists anarchists as one of the main groups to focus on and a recent FBI memorandum issued to local police forces about dealing with anti-war demonstrations says that they are specifically focusing on identifying anarchists. In the same memorandum they advise local police to report any suspicion activity to “counter-terrorism squads”. Thus, movement toward a greater focus on anarchists by the authorities is developing, and we need to be aware of this in order to fight it effectively on our terms.

But in dealing with these matters there are certain things we need to keep in mind. Of course, the forces of repression would love to see us all locked up and out of the way, but they know this is unlikely. So the strate-

gies of harassment, investigation and prosecution have another purpose as well, that of keeping us focused on self-defense. Such a focus has certain effects. First of all, it draws our energy away from attacking the institutions that make up this society. This happens on all levels. Our analyses and theoretical endeavors are turned toward specifically analyzing the repressive apparatus rather than the totality of this society and its institutions. Focusing on the worst, we lose sight of the fact that even the best of this society requires domination and exploitation. Also focusing on defense can easily lead to compromise with the authorities as we try to claim what little ground we think we have to defend ourselves. Encountering the immediate horrors of police harassment and of prisons can easily lead one to place the amelioration of these horrors above the necessity of destroying the society of prisons, particularly when it is our friends or ourselves who are suffering these horrors. But if we give in to this pressure, the state has succeeded in its strategy. Thus, it is necessary to see these situations as a challenge and to confront them with attack not defense. This is what distinguishes prison support from revolutionary solidarity.

REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY: A Challenge

The tendency to fall into a defensive attitude in the face of repression is best counteracted by developing an understanding and practice of revolutionary solidarity.

Revolutionary solidarity is, above all, a *revolutionary practice*. What this means is that it carries within itself the aims of revolution. For this reason, as anarchists, we cannot base solidarity on any authoritarian or economic foundations. It is not a matter of obligation, duty or debt. No one owes anyone solidarity, regardless of what they have done or what they are going through. Rather the basis of solidarity is the recognition of one's own struggle in that of others – in other words, complicity. This is of major importance. If solidarity is the recognition of my own struggle in the struggle of others, it is carried out in practice precisely through continue that struggle, continuing to attack this social order, and doing so with a focus on what unites my struggle with that of others.

In this light, it should be clear that revolutionary solidarity is not merely support. On the practical level, it is obviously necessary to correspond and visit our imprisoned comrades, and to find ways to help them take care of various needs. But if this becomes the focus of what we call “solidarity”, then we have reduced solidarity to mere charitable social work. The maintenance of connections, of friendships and comradeship in the midst of repression is one important factor for maintaining support. But what is most significant is active solidarity with the *active revolt* of our comrades who are locked up or otherwise suffering focused repression. It is within this context that the specific activity of support (letters, visits, financial support, etc) can become a part of the practice of solidarity as the help to maintain communication between all of us fighting against this system.

This quote from the Elephant Editions pamphlet *Revolutionary Solidarity* clarifies matters further:

“Solidarity lies in action. Action that sinks its roots in one’s own project that is carried on coherently and proudly too, especially in times when it might be dangerous even to express one’s ideas publicly. A project that expresses solidarity with joy in the game of life that above all makes us free ourselves, destroys alienation, exploitation, mental poverty, opening up infinite spaces devoted to experimentation and the continual activity of one’s mind in a project aimed at realizing itself in insurrection.

“A project which is not specifically linked to the repression that has struck

our comrades but which continues to evolve and make social tension grow, to the point of making it explode so strongly that the prison walls fall down by themselves.

“A project which is a point of reference and a stimulus for the imprisoned comrades, who in turn are point of reference for it.”

So revolutionary solidarity is the complicity in revolutionary struggle between individuals in different specific situations who can nonetheless see that their revolutionary projects coincide. Let's consider the project of revolutionary struggle against the prison system. Comrades inside prison will inevitably involve themselves in struggles against the specific conditions of their imprisonment – for example, the ongoing struggle against the FIES (special isolation units) in Spanish prisons. There are various tactics used in these struggles. Underlying all of them is a refusal to cooperate with the prison regime. Thus, various sorts of strikes, collective revolts, riots and the destruction of prison property have all been used. But one of the most common tactics is the hunger strike. The reasons this tactic is so common among prisoners is that it can be used collectively or individually, it is completely in the hands of those using it and it puts a great deal of pressure on the prison authorities. At the same time, the effectiveness of the hunger strike – especially when used by one or only a few individuals – depends on a situation of permanent conflict on the outside, ongoing battle against the structures and individuals responsible for repression. In practice this can include flyers, demonstration and graffiti campaigns expressing solidarity with the comrades inside, but also in sabotage and other forms of attack against the police, judiciary and prison systems. *Os Cangaceiros*, a group of rebels in France, provide a fine example. From 1984 into the 1990's, they were involved in active sabotage of the prison system in solidarity with a number of prison revolts were occurring in France. Along with a variety of acts of vandalism and sabotage and the theft and distribution of the plans for a major prison building project in France, they published significant analyses of the prison and justice system and their relationship to society as a whole. And many others chose to imitate their activity of sabotage against the prison system.

The sort of activity described above shows a principled approach to the struggle against the prison system and the practice of solidarity. They share a few things in common: they can be used autonomously outside the framework either of the institutions of the state or the institutions of the left (parties, unions and the like); they involve no delegation or mediation to be carried out; they do not involve negotiation or any sort of com-

promise with those in power. Of course, they do require a movement committed to an ongoing battle against the entire society of prisons, a movement in permanent conflict with the present social order. The lack of such a movement makes it easy to compromise one's stance whether because one is in prison oneself or because those one cares for are. But anarchist principles are not essentially *moral*, but have their basis in a logic of practice. When we put our time and energy into petitioning, negotiating, litigating and so on, this is time and energy taken away from the project of destroying the society of imprisonment and law. Furthermore, these practices are based in the institutions of the state, in the legal and judiciary system. Thus, they make us dependent upon the goodwill of the state and its institutions. This can only end up strengthening the very institutions that we claim we want to put an end to. In addition, this dependence on the state as the very precise effect of undermining any trace of self-determination in our activity, thus undermining our capacity for direct action as well. How far this goes in deteriorating one's perspective and critical capacities becomes evident when the concessions granted by the state in these contexts – minor reforms or simple applications of existing laws – are proclaimed to be victories. Here the reformist mentality has come to dominate one's practice – the idea that one can use the most compromised means as long as they are “effective” in the most immediate sense. But for those who seek the destruction of the entire system of domination, these are not victories, but defeats, because they point to resignation in the face of a system that seems unassailable, moving one to use its means to achieve what, in the long run, can only be its ends.

So the practice of revolutionary solidarity presents us with a challenge. Repression is growing as is specific focus by the authorities on anarchists. We will likely see more and more of us under investigation, facing trial and spending time in prison. It is very easy in such situations to simply retreat, to let things blow over or, worse, to distance ourselves from comrades facing prison or from actions that frighten us. This response would be a major victory for the state. So the challenge we face is that of developing the strength within ourselves to act on our own terms against the state and against its systems of repression while also learning to coordinate these actions without compromising ourselves. Since revolutionary solidarity, at least from an anarchist perspective, is the practical recognition of one's project of struggle within the struggle of another, it requires that we each act as we see fit against this order, as we are moved to act by our own confrontation with its oppressive power in our daily lives. But it also requires that we learn to weave these actions together in a way that

strengthens them and makes their meaning clearer. There is no panacea, no organization or program, that can provide this, because all such panaceas require that we adjust ourselves to their requirements. Rather it is necessary to develop the clarity and candor from which relations of affinity can develop, spreading their complicity in revolt further and further and maybe even flowering into insurrection. This is the challenge we confront in the face of an increasingly repressive system of domination.

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